

VZCZCXRO1183
OO RUEHDA
DE RUEHAK #1553/01 3001255
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 271255Z OCT 09
FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1077
RUEKJCS/CJCS WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/OSD WASHDC//PA
RUEUITH/ODC ANKARA TU
INFO RUEHTH/AMEMBASSY ATHENS 0099
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 6421
RUEHDA/AMCONSUL ADANA 4227
RUEHBS/AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS 7608
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO 7506
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 4097
RUEUITH/DET 1 39LG ANKARA TU
RHMFIUU/39OS INCIRLIK AB TU
RHMFIUU/AFOSI DET 523 IZMIR TU
RHMFIUU/39ABG INCIRLIK AB TU
RHMFIUU/AFOSI DET 522 INCIRLIK AB TU
RUEUITH/AFLO ANKARA TU

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 ANKARA 001553

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EUR/SE, EUR/PD, NEA/PD, DRL
JCS PASS J-5/CDR S. WRIGHT

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [TU](#) [PREL](#) [KPAO](#)
SUBJECT: TURKISH MEDIA REACTION
MONDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2009

Media Highlights: Iraq: Bloodshed in Baghdad; Amb. Jeffrey's Outreach on PKK, Afghanistan; Basbug and Barzani Enter Debate Over PKK Returnees; Op/Ed's on PKK And Applause for US Approach; PM Erdogan says "Iran is a friend;" IAEA Inspects Iran Nukes; President Gul in Serbia; PM Erdogan Visits Pakistan;

Blood Shed Again In Baghdad (Sabah)
The bombings in Baghdad continues to make headlines in all papers. In "The Bloodiest Attack," mainstream Milliyet says, "Two suicide car bombs targeting Iraqi Justice Ministry and the Baghdad provincial administration is the bloodiest attack since August 2007." Mainstream Hurriyet headlines, "A Bomb to Justice," and characterizes the bombings as "a serious blow" against Maliki in a critical period. Mainstream Sabah opines, "the attacks came just before Iraq's top leadership is set to meet for a compromise on the disputed election law ahead of a crucial parliamentary vote in January." Liberal Radikal carries the headline, "Iraqi Capital All in Blood," saying, "Iraqi officials pointed al Qaeda for the attacks."

Jeffrey: The PKK Question Must be Resolved before the US Withdraws from Iraq
Sabah, Taraf, Yeni Safak and Zaman carried front page coverage of Saturday's roundtable interview with Ambassador Jeffrey. Mainstream Sabah gives extensive front-page coverage to his comments that the PKK should be "brought to an end" before the withdrawal of US troops from Iraq. "The sooner Turkey solves this problem, the better," noted Jeffrey. Jeffrey underlined that the democratic initiative was a plan shaped by Turkey, and not the US. "We support the Turkish military operations against the PKK. We also support Turkey's democratic initiative. This is a matter of sensitive internal political debate, therefore we do not speak on it," emphasized Jeffrey. Jeffrey said the US was "making sacrifices," and in line with the requests of Turkey, was keeping in Iraq the air platforms needed in Afghanistan. Islamist-oriented Zaman quotes Jeffrey regarding Treasury's sanctions against three PKK leaders as drug kindpins. "We have suggested the European countries do the same," said Jeffrey. On Israel and Syria, Jeffrey said if Turkey wants to be an effective mediator between Israel and Syria, it must keep an equal distance to both sides.

Basbug Enters Debate Over PKK Returnees - Joint Decision With Erdogan

The GoT's decision to postpone more PKK returnees and the Turkish military's reaction is the main news in Monday's print and TV. Milliyet headlined that the decision to postpone PKK returnees was a "Joint Decision" that was made during a critical telephone conversation between PM Erdogan and TGS Chief General Basbug. Saturday's Sabah reports that the DTP officials were determined to hold celebrations for the new returnees as well, while Istanbul Mayor Muammer Guler stressed that they definitely would not permit such shows. Turkish General Staff (TGS) also announced on Friday that such celebrations were "unacceptable." Leftist-nationalist Cumhuriyet reports that TGS Chief General Basbug said "it is not possible to accept recent developments. I share the feelings of relatives of martyrs and veterans." Mainstream Hurriyet reports that in protest against the AKP's democratic initiative and the PKK returnees, around 300 drivers and riders visited the Edirnekapi Martyrdom memorial in Istanbul yesterday with their cars and motorbikes, draped in Turkish flags and anti-PKK slogans. Today's Milliyet reports that, speaking to the journalists in Antalya, main opposition party CHP leader Deniz Baykal criticized the AKP government's democratic opening and said "The bases of the process was wrong and the mistakes was blocked by Turkish people." Mainstream Vatan quotes Baykal as saying "The Government had to take a back step after seeing the public reaction to the celebrations."

Barzani Says Celebrations Provocative: In a related story, mainstreams Vatan and Hurriyet report that KRG Prime Minister Necirvan Barzani also criticized ceremonies held to celebrate the

ANKARA 00001553 002 OF 003

PKK 's return, saying "it is an important step for the PKK to send Turkey a peace group, however, this should not be done in a provocative way. The PKK should not adopt provocative ways which could be violated by the enemies of the Kurds and could block the process." Barzani added that he was pleased with Turkey's gesture and he hopes that this project will continue in order to resolve the Kurdish issue.

Op/Ed's on PKK and Applause for US Approach;. In "Regional Dynamics" Kadri Gursel in mainstream Milliyet calls the government not to defer the Kurdish initiative process by making reference to Ambassador Jeffrey's comments. He observes: "The current circumstances are forcing the continuation of this process, just like Ambassador Jeffrey was emphasizing the other day that the US wants to finish the PKK issue before the completion of the withdrawal from Iraq."

Conservative daily Turkiye's writer Yilmaz Oztuna believes that the PKK was being used by both the US and the KRG, "but those times are over" he concludes. He says: "The US is determined to leave a stable Iraq so that it will not pose any headache in the aftermath of pullout. In this context, there is no room for PKK and Turkey is expected to develop better ties with the KRG."

In "From Opening to Dissolving" Islamist-oriented Zaman's columnist Ali Bulac blames the DTP for working toward a divided society "as oppsed to helping for unity." Similarly, Islamist oriented Yeni Safak writer Yasin Aktay suggests empathy: "The DTP has to understand the sentiment in other parts of society. Even a little bit of empathy will be helpful if the genuine goal is peace."

Mainstream Vatan's columnist Okay Gonensin thinks there is a responsibility for DTP as well as for the main opposition. In "Reactions" he says: "Both opposition parties are trying to work more on the tension-building while the DTP presents an irresponsible attitude. This process is meant to be an overall peace and democracy not an overall conflict seeking."

"Iran is Our Friend" Says PM Erdogan

TV outlets are reporting this morning on The Guardian's exclusive interview with Turkish PM Tayyip Erdogan. The interview highlights PM Erdogan saying "Ahmadinejad is Turkey's friend and they have not experienced any problems with Iran." PM Erdogan warned Europe not to ignore Turkey's strengths, emphasizing that "being in the EU,

Turkey would be building bridges between the people of Muslim world and the non-Muslim world."

UN Experts in Iran for Nuclear Inspection

Turkish media carry straightforward coverage on the report that UN nuclear experts inspected a uranium enrichment site in the city of Qum whose existence was announced by Iran last month. Mainstream Hurriyet headline reads, "First UN Inspection in Iran's Site," pointing "while world powers pressure Iran to put its uranium enrichment activities, they also want to get much of its enriched uranium reserve." Leftist-nationalist Cumhuriyet headlines, "IAEA Inspection Starts in Iran," while in "Uranium Inspection," mainstream Sabah says, "Iran's nuclear site is inspected by IAEA officials." Islamist-oriented Zaman carries the headline, "First Visit to Iran's New Site."

A Significant Visit to Serbia

Mainstreams Sabah and Milliyet report that President Gul went to Serbia on an official visit together with a 115 member delegation. Sabah quotes the President saying "I strongly believe that my visit to Serbia will contribute to our efforts to establish stability and security in the Balkans and to improve our relations with Serbia." Milliyet notes that Gul is first Turkish President since 1986 to visit Serbia. President Gul noted that our relations with Serbia recently came to a point that it could be counted as the strategic cooperation and added that Serbia's responsible stance has a vital importance for the region's stability.

ANKARA 00001553 003 OF 003

Erdogan Visits Pakistan to Avert Military Takeover (Radikal)

All papers report Turkey was intermediating to end the tensions between Iran and Pakistan. Iran accuses Pakistan together with the US and the UK for harboring Jundallah, the "Army of God," which claimed responsibility over the October 18 suicide bomb attack in the southern Iranian province of Sistan-Baluchistan. More than 40 people including seven commanders of Iran's Revolutionary Guards were killed in the attacks. In a joint press conference with his Pakistani counterpart Yousuf Raza Gilani, Erdogan said he was going to discuss the attack with Iranian President Ahmadinejad. Erdogan stressed that joint action was needed for peace in the region. Papers report Turkey and Pakistan established a high-level cooperation council.

Monday's liberal Radikal warns a military coup was imminent in Pakistan, and comments that Turkey was working to convince the Pakistani military to abandon plans for a military takeover and support the establishment of a national unity government in the country. Erdogan is currently visiting Pakistan after Turkish army chief General Ilker Basbug called on the Swat valley from October 12-15. Radikal claims Pakistani army chief General Ashfaq Kayani was expected to seize control of the country, and stresses that the government of Gilani could not do anything to avert a coup.

Upcoming events:

Q October 26-November 8: Turkey and Britain will carry out joint military exercises in Salisbury.

Q October 30: Foreign Minister Davutoglu and Foreign Trade Minister Caglayan will visit the city of Erbil in northern Iraq.

Q November 8: CHP leader Baykal will go to Iraq to meet Iraqi President Talabani.

TV News (NTV)

Domestic

Q Demonstrators rallied Sunday in the cities of Ankara, Istanbul, Konya, Afyonkarahisar, Mus, Konya, Yalova, Edirne and Canakkale to protest the celebrations organized at the return of the PKK militants to Turkey.

Q In addition to a reception to be hosted by President Gul, the military will hold a separate reception to mark the Republican Day on October 29.

Q Deputy Prime Minister Ali Babacan said IMF funds could trigger growth in Turkey, and signaled that a deal with the IMF was

possible.

Q Turkey's Privatization Administration prepares plans for the sale of 56 state-owned power plants.

World

Q Former Kurdish Prime Minister Nechirvan Barzani said the celebrations organized by DTP to welcome the PKK groups in Turkey had been "provocation."

Q Pakistan removes visa requirements for Turkish businessmen.

JEFFREY